DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 104 058 EC 071 723

AUTHOR Troutt, George, Jr.
TITLE A Competency Base for Curriculum Development in Preschool Education: Volume 2; Responses of a National Panel of Child Development Scholars.
INSTITUTION Appalachia Educational Lab., Charleston, W. Va.
NOTE 97p.; For related information see EC 071 722-725

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.76 HC-$4.43 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS Attitudes; Behavioral Objectives; Child Development; Classification; Communication Skills; Criterion Referenced Tests; *Curriculum Development; *Evaluation Methods; Exceptional Child Research; *General Education; Motor Development; *Preschool Education; Rating Scales; Social Development
IDENTIFIERS Competency Based Curriculum; *Home Oriented Preschool Education Program

ABSTRACT

Presented in the second volume on the Home-Oriented Preschool Education project are responses of a National Panel of Child Development scholars to a "prime competency list" for normal children up to 6-years-old. The competencies, drawn from a literature search, include behaviors in five categories: classification, communication, coordination, habits and attitudes, and social relationships. Reported are the panel members' critiques and suggestions for revision of each competency. Provided is the early childhood competency rating scale sent to National Panel members and Appalachian Panel members (whose names are listed) to evaluate the empirical research support for the competencies. (CL)

ED104028

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A Competency Base for Curriculum Development in Preschool Education

Volume II
Responses of a National Panel of Child Development Scholars

Marketable Preschool Education Program

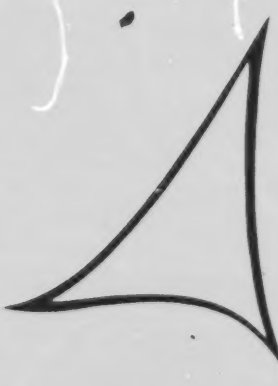
Appalachia Educational Laboratory, Inc.
Charleston, West Virginia 25325

EC071223

A Competency Base For Curriculum Development In Preschool Education

Volume II
Responses of a National Panel of Child Development Scholars

George Troutt, Jr. Ph.D.
Principal Investigator



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Introduction

The HOPE (Home Oriented Preschool Education) Program is attempting to build an empirical base for its curriculum in the second generation of program development. An investigation was conducted as a systematic search for a master list of competencies, terminal behavior 6 years 0 months, which "normal" American children possess via inn teness or acquisition. It was seemed essential that this competency base be established prior to the development of behavioral descriptives.

It should be carefully noted that the investigator was concerned with terminal behavior. The intent of the major investigative question was to answer "can they do it" according to normal growth and development patterns and "do they do it" according to results of program evaluation.

The investigator established a National Panel of Child Development Scholars (see Pages 79-83), as a group of reactors to a "Prime Competency List." These reactions to this list are recorded on Pages 17-77 in this document.

The responses of "Prime Competency List" were analyzed. This analyzation produced "An Early Childhood Competency Rating Instrument" (see Pages 87-104), which was submitted to the National Panel for their ratings. This same instrument was also submitted to an Appalachian Panel of Child Development Scholars (see Pages 83-85) for judging. The results of these reactive processes can be found in the main document of the investigation: "A Competency Base for Curriculum Development in Preschool Education." The competencies that remain after analytical treatment will be those competencies that form the curriculum base. The bridge that took us from the established competencies to those decisions necessary to form the behavioral descriptives was the reactions of approximately one-thousand parents of Appalachian preschoolers to a similar listing of the competencies.

PRIME
COMPETENCY
LIST

I. Category: Classification

A. Competency: Ability to form concepts

Example: To recognize repetition of patterns
To establish and label categories
To generalize from one situation to another

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

B. Competency: Ability to discriminate by sound

Example: To distinguish between sounds
To distinguish rhythm
To identify sources of sounds

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

C. Competency: Ability to discriminate by sight

Example: To distinguish shapes
To distinguish sizes
To distinguish colors

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

D. Competency: Ability to discriminate by touch

Example: To distinguish texture
To distinguish temperature
To distinguish shapes

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

E. Competency: Ability to sort

Example: To recognize similar qualities in different objects

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

F. Competency: Ability to ordinate

Example: To arrange in sequence
To construct one-to-one correspondence

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

G. Competency: Ability to conserve

Example: To match on a one-to-one basis
To distinguish quantity
To correlate shape with quantity

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

H. Competency: Ability to measure

Example: To distinguish time
To distinguish weight
To distinguish distance

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

I. Competency: Ability to denote spatial relationships

Example: To distinguish relative locations

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

II. Category: Communication

A. Competency: Ability to express feelings

Example: By statement
By demeanor
By avoidance

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

B. Competency: Ability to articulate

Example: To be precise in speech
To be sensitive to vocal inflections
To be sensitive to audience

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

C. Competency: Ability to describe (essentially a pictorial concern)

Example: To recognize the salient characters of the things to be described
To use words with precision
To use comparisons

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

D. Competency: Ability to explain (essentially a functional concern)

Example: To recognize the dynamics of the operation to be explained
To detain relationships of function
To be aware of audience's familiarity with thing being explained

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

E. Competency: Ability to label

Example: To realize the importance of labels as a convenience in communicating with others
To realize the connection of function to labeling
To realize that all feelings, conducts, and materials can be labelled

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

F. Competency: Ability to recognize the social functions of language

Example: To realize that language is neither "right" nor "wrong," but rather "appropriate" or "inappropriate" to a given situation
To realize that language has a function other than communication of information, that function being class/character typing

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

G. Competency: Ability to use non-verbal cues

Example: To recognize that communication can proceed without the written or spoken word
To become acquainted with common gestures

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

III. Category: Coordination

A. Competency: Ability to construct

Example: To be aware of the relationships of parts to the whole
To assess materials
To use materials

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

B. Competency: Ability to copy

Example: To develop eye-hand coordination
To comprehend design

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

C. Competency: Ability to draw

Example: To conceive and hold mental pictures
To develop eye-hand coordination
To comprehend design

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

D. Competency: Ability to use body to express feelings

Example: To recognize effect of physical gestures on others
To dance
To accept body movements as a respectable form of expression

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

E. Competency: Ability to control large muscles

Example: To balance
To move in the ways one wants to

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

F. Competency: Ability to control small muscles

Example: To manipulate small objects with hands and fingers
To develop eye-hand coordination
To use many parts of the body simultaneously

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

IV. Category: Habits and Attitudes

A. Competency: Ability to initiate action

Example: To realize when an action would improve existing conditions
To know the range and probable results of actions

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

B. Competency: Ability to plan action

Example: To make choices based on the dynamics of a given situation
To assess resources
To anticipate end results

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

C. Competency: Ability to persist in actions

Example: To increase attention span
To recognize correlation between time spent and results achieved
To recognize interim successes

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

D. Competency: Ability to be self-reliant

Example: To know one's own abilities
To accurately assess one's work
To realize that others cannot always be counted on for help

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

E. Competency: Ability to sustain health and safety

Example: To recognize what is beneficial and detrimental to health
To see the connection of good physical health to effective mental activity
To realize that prevention of illness is primary to being healthy
To recognize appropriate social behaviors

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

V. Category: Social Relationships

A. Competency: Ability to assume appropriate social behaviors

Example: To listen and follow directions
To work with others for a common goal
To converse well

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

B. Competency: Ability to get attention

Example: To role play
To ask questions
To manifest a sense of urgency

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

C. Competency: Ability to maintain attention

Example: To be direct
To be sincere
To maintain eye contact

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

D. Competency: Ability to adopt the perspective of another

Example: To role play
To put oneself in the conditions of others
To play with and talk to others

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

E. Competency: Ability to respect the individuality of others

Example: To tolerate visible differences in others
To express admiration for the differences of others
To express concern over the difference of others

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

RESPONSES TO
"PRIME COMPETENCY LIST"
(NATIONAL PANEL OF SCHOLARS)

I. Category: Classification

A. Competency: Ability to form concepts

Example: To recognize repetition of patterns
To establish and label categories
To generalize from one situation to another

Suggested Changes:

To recognize whether objects (or events) are similar or different

To apprehend the nature of the similarities or differences

To label categories

To verbalize principles underlying categories.

Change Category title to: Classification, Cognitive Functioning

To identify attributes of concepts?

To establish and label conceptual groups

Comments:

List is too general. May mean "to recognize additional instances of a category."

Does this imply that these should be *accurate* concepts or does this apply to the uses of the *processes* involved in concept formation? Children under six use the process but the concepts formed are often inaccurate.

The ability to form concepts is probably innate, not learnable. What is learned is a variety of concepts.

1. Identifies patterns formed by simple geometrical figures.

2. What categories?

3. Any specific concept must be "generalized," otherwise it is not a learned concept.

How will this be distinguished from the development of learning sets, e.g., discrimination learning sets? What place will be given to Piagetian concept development? The examples given are not yet behavioral. When they are made behavioral, it is possible to determine whether they are appropriate to the age range of under 73 months. Specific instances can be generated for each of the above which will be well beyond the age range in question.

Basic concept formation is among the most important competencies to be developed. Add an emphasis on "social" concepts, i.e., categories of things that involve people.

I think these are possible depending upon the type of patterns and categories involved. Gross patterns - yes; subtle patterns - no. Also, I'm not convinced that generalizing from one situation to another is a competency that one would expect by age six.

Should there be a clarification of the *level* of conceptualization; i.e., the ability might be limited to one or two attribute concepts at the target age of two, but vary as the child gets older?

Since every child in the world is able to form concepts, the issues of concern must turn to the familiarity of the concepts, the difficulty of the concepts, and the ability to integrate concepts. Thus this task should include, first, a task to demonstrate whether or not the child is able to form a concept at all. There are many procedures one can use here. One involves a sorting task in which one could have four animals and four foods and ask the child to put them into two piles. Presumably most children will separate the animals from the food, indicating that they can use their concepts. However, here we are dealing with concepts that are already in their repertoire. Suppose we wanted to demonstrate that the child could infer or create a *new* concept. Here we might have a simple concept acquisition task where we have a deck of cards containing some pictures with only one design or object on them and others with many designs and objects on them, let us say ranging from 6 to 15. The child is told there are two kinds of cards in the deck and they are called two different names, the "Johns" and the "Jims." The child has to figure out which cards are the "Johns" and which are the "Jims." Most children should be able to solve this task easily, which would indicate that they have the basic ability to infer rules or concepts from information. Having determined that, the important thing is to determine the child's capability at this function and, that of course, will be based on the prejudices of the investigator.

Fundamental, certainly, but will have to be very specific and provided illustrations of each of the above, such as, for the first, geometrical patterns, then word patterns, number patterns, musical patterns, and so on.

Omit as a "Competency" and include concepts in appropriate places as indicated. Concepts must be developed with reference to a context.

B. Competency: Ability to discriminate by sound

Example: To distinguish among sounds
To distinguish rhythm
To identify sources of sounds

Suggested Changes:

To perceive a sound as separate from its background
"Real-world" sounds
Tones
Phonemes
Words

To distinguish rhythm, cadence

To analyze oral forms into constituent parts

To synthesize units into an organized oral form

To distinguish characteristics of sounds - loud - soft - high - low

Distinguishes two-step sound sequences, such as so-fa, fa-so

Reproduces simple rhythmical patterns

Identifies sources of common animal and machine sounds (dog, automobile horn, etc.)

To identify sources of sounds be name

To identify sources of sounds by direction

Comments:

Ability to discriminate sound is innate, not learnable.

Operational definitions are so essential here. What kinds of sounds? Pure tones? Musical sounds? Common environmental sounds? Unusual environmental sounds? The difficulty level of each task, and hence a determination of its appropriateness to the age range, will depend heavily upon what is meant by sound. What about adding, "To recognize the tone of voice of an adult or child as excited, friendly, angry, etc.?" I'm not certain that rhythm is a property of sound; it may well represent a kinesthetic/auditory intersensory process of discrimination.

Rhythmic conceptualization may add lustre to the child's life, but these skills are of only moderate importance. Add example of pitch discrimination.

Again, it depends on what kind of rhythm and sounds. Obviously, infants can discriminate loud noises from soft. Until you specify what differences are involved it's difficult to say whether this would be applicable. As a competency, a child who learns to speak is obviously distinguishing between sounds.

What kinds of sounds? Running water, trains, fire engines, cows, musical instruments, or what? This needs to be specific or just use an audio or hearing evaluation by an audiologist.

I do not regard this competence as very important as long as the child's hearing is adequate. Every child should be given a hearing test and if he passes the hearing test, then I would assume he could distinguish between sounds. The only important skill would be the ability to discriminate similar phonic sounds, an ability which Carroll calls "phonic coding ability." I would test to see if the child can discriminate similar phonemes and similar syllables, but aside from that I would not invest much effort in his ability to discriminate other sounds, if his hearing were adequate.

Real-world sounds and Phonemes are the ones that relate to success in school. Tones are a different "breed of cat."

Suggest the following as examples and sequence: a. distinguish between sounds from different sources by matching, recognition, and labeling. b. distinguish pitch (e.g., high-low through matching, recognition, and labeling) c. distinguish intensity (e.g., loud-soft through matching, recognition, and labeling).

This item deserves much lower priority. There is no convincing evidence that a deficiency in this area is common to underachieving children (early), Martin Deutsch to the contrary, notwithstanding.

C. Competency: Ability to discriminate by sight

Example: To distinguish shapes
To distinguish sizes
To distinguish colors

Suggested Changes:

To perceive a visual form as distinct from its background

To distinguish forms in terms of physical attributes (shape, color, sizes, etc.)

To distinguish letters

To distinguish some simple words

To apply names to simple forms (e.g., circle, triangle, letters) and attributes (color, etc.)

To analyze forms into constituent parts

To synthesize units or parts into an organized form

To distinguish shapes - 2 dimensional, 3 dimensional, letters and numbers

To distinguish directions

Distinguish color using matching, recognition, and labeling sequence

Distinguish shape using matching, recognition, and labeling sequence

Distinguish size using matching, recognition, and labeling sequence

Comments:

Ability to discriminate visually is not learnable, but particular discriminations are:

1. Identifies common 2-dimensional geometrics

2. Identifies members of pairs of objects as larger, smaller

3. Identifies colors when named (blue, yellow, brown, white, black, etc.)

Much evidence would suggest that visual development in both discrimination and selective attention centers upon form and color, with size being of relatively secondary importance. Operational definitions are

again important, since rather fine discriminations can be trained even with severely retarded individuals, whereas it seems evident that there must be some practical limits beyond which finer discriminations are superfluous. Thus, we should/must face the question of: what discriminations are to be made and under what conditions of viewing?

The long-term significance of color and form discrimination are not well known, but most people attach considerable significance to this activity. Add examples that include real-life objects. Letters?

A child who recognizes his mother is discriminating by sight. It is easier to comment on specifics. Color and size differences, if the differences are gross, can be discriminated. As for shape - it depends.

As with sounds, if the child's visual acuity is adequate, as determined by test, I would not emphasize this skill either. However, since phonic coding ability is important, I would also think that the ability to discriminate letters, is important and I would have a test for the child's ability to discriminate various letters of the alphabet, independent of whether he can write them or read them. That is to say, a task very much like Eleanor Gibson's in which the child is shown as E or an F or a G and a row of six letters, one of which is the standard, and the child is asked to pick out the standard.

All clear, obvious, and fairly well researched.

Sight should probably come first.

This item deserves much lower priority. There is no convincing evidence that a deficiency in this area is common to underachieving children (early), Martin Deutsch to the contrary, notwithstanding.

D. Competency: Ability to discriminate by touch

Example: To distinguish texture
To distinguish temperature
To distinguish shapes

Suggested Changes:

To distinguish functional objects

Identifies texture of materials as smooth, rough, slippery, etc.

Distinguishes hotter and cooler temperatures of surfaces, liquids

Previously covered

Comments:

I think the word texture here may need some interpretation. In its broad sense, it could include form and consistency - but there may be a further example which applies to "state." Do you describe the texture of a liquid?

Ability to discriminate is not learned.

Texture may be important. Shape, however, is surely not equally important tactilely at all ages through 72 months. Wide ability variations are evident in tactile form recognition, raising the question of ability vs. trainability. Continued reliance on tactile sensations up to 72 months may be a sign of immaturity in visual development. For such developmental aspects of behavior, reliance on the conception of terminal competencies rather than upon ontogenetically different stages of development can be confusing and even harmful. Another aspect of touch to be added is the child's response to being touched, since this can be informative regarding sensory and body image development.

Touch discrimination of modest importance.

Here again you are faced with justifiable-noticeable differences. Of course a child can distinguish a hot radiator from a cool glass of water, etc. Is this a psychomotor or a conceptual competence?

Is the goal to simply discriminate and say "same" or "different" or is it to label the differences and provide verbal descriptions?

Here, too, I would concentrate on discrimination of letter-like forms haptically and not pay too much

attention to other categories. One should keep in mind that a child's tendency to be reflective or impulsive on this task has about one third of the variance for performance. That is to say, children who are impulsive and make fast decisions will, on discrimination tasks like this, make many more errors. They are capable of making the discrimination but their tempo of responding interferes with their performance.

Only distinguishing shapes relate to success in school, as far as I know the literature.

Could add the use of the matching, recognition and labeling sequence. In all of the above three categories, the concept of shapes, colors, pitch, etc. will be developed.

This item deserves much lower priority. There is no convincing evidence that a deficiency in this area is common to underachieving children (early), Martin Deutsch to the contrary, notwithstanding.

E. Competency: Ability to sort

Example: To recognize similar qualities in different objects

Suggested Changes:

Marked "X" through whole section

To recognize similar functions and relationships in different objects

To provide descriptions while sorting

To label the group of objects

Comments:

Sort objects of differing physical characteristics in terms of common attributes of shape, color, texture.

I have always been somewhat puzzled by the separation in the child development literature of this competency from that of your "Ability to form concepts." The child who successfully sorts is demonstrating a sequential precursor to conceptual behavior, and whenever the objects are different, as stated here, the behavior appears to be a function of concepts or of preconcepts.

Sorting is important, depending on the qualities being sorted on. Add examples stressing similar functions and relations to other objects as well as similar qualities.

Should the competency include language as an integral part; i.e., to recognize and describe while sorting? What complexity or how many dimensions or attributes will be included?

This skill is very much related to the first skill called "Ability to form concepts." It is important that the child be flexible and be able to sort an array on several dimensions. Thus, one should give the child an array of 10 to 12 objects and ask him to divide them into groups that are similar. After he makes one sort, test the limits to see how many different arrays he can produce. One should appreciate that the category the child uses will be highly specific to the array given and one should not make inferences about the ability or the child's position on a concrete-abstract continuum based on only nee array. In general, I feel the important competency to be taken from a sorting task is to see how many different categories the child can produce from a given set of arrays.

Yes - clear, well researched.

OK - again a standard item.

F. Competency: Ability to ordinate

Example: To arrange in sequence
To construct one-to-one correspondence

Suggested Changes:

To arrange pictures or objects in a "logical" or temporal sequence

To arrange objects or events in terms of magnitude

To have elementary notions of inclusion, exclusion

To identify positional relationships such as first, last, middle

To count

Arranges objects in sequence according to size or numerousness

Matches objects in different sets to achieve one-to-one correspondence

To establish one-to-one correspondence with the match, recognition, and label sequence

To establish set-numeral relationships

To establish ordinal position

Comments:

It is implied that this category is part of the Piagetian number concept series. Sequential, however, is ambiguous in this regard as a descriptor, since sequential arrangement can be accomplished along dimensions less centrally related to number than are other dimensions. Examples should thus be expanded to designate the types of conditions under which inferences are to be made that the child is arranging in sequence in the sense intended here. Even more clearly, one-to-one correspondence relates to number and yet again correspondence may be established for objects, events, etc. on bases other than numerosity. Further, the conditions under which equivalence is to be demonstrated directly affect the difficulty of demonstrating whether the child can yet do so. Again there is a need to be more specific, at least setting an upper limit on task difficulty in terms of the order of sets upon which equivalence is to be demonstrated, with what typical kinds of material (some material may stimulate the imagination and lead away from the desired operation), etc.

Ordinal skill is very important.

One-to-one correspondence probably should not be expected of all children.

Objects, pictures, ideas, etc. The complexity will obviously be a function of age so there should probably be a series of tasks ranging from simple to complex.

This is a very important skill. I would only add that it is very important to vary the materials and have the child ordinate beads and dolls and sticks so that one does not test this competence in a limited domain.

Yes - no problem here. Need more illustrations.

OK - a standard item.

G. Competency: Ability to conserve

Example: To match on a one-to-one basis
To distinguish quantity
To correlate shape with quantity

Suggested Changes:

To distinguish quantity according to a common metric

To distinguish quantity under various transformations

Crossed out "Ability to conserve"

Crossed out "To correlate shape with quantity"

Separates objects in groups to achieve one-to-one matches

Identifies larger and smaller pairs of objects

To conserve number

Comments:

To distinguish quantity - how much? This is not a reasonable expectation for children under 6 years. A few will accomplish it but this should not be a general expectation until one or more years later, especially among population groups similar to those included in the study.

I am uncertain of the issue being raised by "correlating shape with quantity" so I cannot respond to that item. I believe this competency should read "Ability to conserve number" to distinguish from volume, mass, etc. What distinction is intended between matching on one-to-one basis here and constructing one-to-one correspondence in Ability to ordinate? Without the particular operations, they seem to refer to the same child behaviors.

There is some question as to whether conservation can be taught. Stress on this, OK, though. Would suggest that attention be given to teaching the relevant physical dimension in various kinds of conservation tasks.

Some kids don't conserve on a stable basis by age six.

At terminal six years there may still be a number of nonconservers.

Here, too, this is an important task but it is very important to vary the materials from clay to sand to cookies and to include mass, weight, area, and size

with both familiar and unfamiliar materials. There is research to show that a child who might not be able to conserve a mass of clay would be able to conserve mass with respect to candy.

To distinguish quantity - illustrate further not clear.

Establishment of one-to-one correspondence elsewhere and distinguishing quantity comes through measurement. Shape-quantity relationships appear rather advanced for the under six year old range (suggest omitting as a "Competency").

No, it is very unlikely that deficiencies in this ability account for educational or developmental underachievement in many children.

(Not sure what is intended here.)

H. Competency: Ability to measure

Example: To distinguish time
To distinguish weight
To distinguish distance

Suggested Changes:

To tell time

To make weight discriminations

To make discriminations in terms of distance and rate

To have some notions of liquid measurement, "dozen," pounds, "degrees Fahrenheit"

To perceive the comparative values of coins, bills

To have some notion of the functions of measuring instruments (e.g., a ruler vs. a measuring cup)

Distinguishes longer and shorter time intervals within a range of 20 seconds

Distinguishes heavier and lighter weights of objects by heft

Distinguishes longer and shorter distances within range of 100 yards.

Comments:

I doubt that time concepts can be meaningful to young children.

Wise examples must have some explanations. In what way does the child distinguish times, weights, distances. If these are examples what about volume, length, etc.

I imagine that the issue of size, see Ability to discriminate by sight, receives a greater relevant emphasis under this competency. By the end of this age period, some children can begin to deal with the measurement of area by interpretation of equal subdivision, and given appropriate equipment they can begin to deal with measurement of volume. The passage of time should be distinguished from the formal aspects of clock reading. This points up that time can be measured both internally/subjectively (method of direct estimate) and externally/by instrument.

Agree. What about brightness and loudness. Would also include as examples "more, less" and "middle position."

What does "measure" mean? Ability to tell time may be a recognition of numbers in relation to a clock and not any "sense" of time. Distinguish weight - does it mean why two objects are a different weight or knowing that ounces and pounds are a metric used in weighing objects.

How will the child be expected to do this? Will the judgments simply be relative or will the child be required to use measuring tools?

This is an extremely tricky category for it is very important to assess the natural categories a child uses. I would suggest a sensitive interview here rather than a task or problem to assess first, if the child appreciates the denotative meaning of concepts like minute, second, day, week, hour, year, pound, ounce, foot, inch, mile, and so on. That is to say, the first task is to determine if the child has any idea of the different magnitudes implied by these concepts. Second, one should give the child paired comparison tasks with objects of different weights, times or different duration, and see if he can detect longer or shorter, greater or larger. One should appreciate that these tasks might be independent and a child who could well tell you that a 10 second delay was longer than a 2 second dealy might not even know the meaning of second or minute. Thus, the detection of the sensory quality of the concept is different from some appreciation of the meaning of the concept. Both should be measured.

All OK - no problem.

These again are relatively sophisticated concepts which perhaps could be begun by relationships, e.g., longer and shorter; heavier and lighter; earlier and later rather than discrete measurement, operations, at least in the early years.

I don't know.

1. Competency: Ability to denote spatial relationships

Example: To distinguish relative locations

Suggested Changes:

To describe relative locations in terms of standard spatial and relational terms (e.g., above, below, right-left, far-near)

Identifies spatial position of objects, or of parts of own body as right-left, up-down, underneath, etc.

Identifies directions of motion of objects - going away, coming towards, ascending, descending, etc.

To distinguish the relative orientation of an object in space

Cross-modal transfer--perhaps as a main competency. This is generalization of information gained in one sensory modality (e.g., sight) to another (touch)

Physical causality

To establish part/whole relationships

To sequence parts (patterning)

To establish left-right orientation

Comments:

The child's concept of space by the end of this age range has undergone a number of recognizable and testable changes. This competency could benefit from being tied more closely to the Piaget series. To do so would require that the examples be expanded and arranged sequentially. The example given does pertain to the concept of space, but as stated could refer either primarily to a pace-memory function or to the concept of space. What about adding to distinguish the relative orientation of an object in space, since this relates to the area of letter and numeral reversals, i.e., as when *d* and *b* are initially confused by most children.

Spatial relations very important. Include as example individual's identification of his own position in physical space.

Again, the problem is how easy or difficult the task would be. A child is able to deal with specific

relationships or he could not walk, or eat, or drink his juice, etc. Obviously, this has to do with competence or level of competence at this point.

Both real and artificial situations. By this, I mean that "real" will involve three dimensional relationships while artificial may often involve two.

This is obviously an important skill and as with the ability to conserve or ordinate it is important that one use both familiar and unfamiliar materials in varied situations.

Need more illustrations, but a good category.

This area might include the one mentioned using the match-recognition-label sequence through above, below statements for example.

I don't know.

II. Category: Communication

A. Competency: Ability to express feelings

Example: By statement
By demeanor
By avoidance

Suggested Changes:

Change Competency title to: Ability to express feelings, show affection

Delete "By avoidance"

Identifies common emotional expressions in *other persons*, e.g., anger, sadness, joy, etc.

Uses common coping reactions to expressions of emotions in others (comforting, distracting, avoidance, etc.)

By approach

By statement accompanying or following a spontaneous action

By statement in lieu of action

To describe alternative feelings through role play or verbalizations

Comments:

What does this contribute?

Ability to express feelings innate, not learned.

We will have to say which feelings, because by 72 months some of the primary emotions are not yet reliable, recognized or expressed. The example, By Avoidance, qualifies as a find of expression but in another sense it may well serve as a substitute for expression and thus indicate a restricted range of expressive behavior.

Expression of feelings is somewhat less important than the psychoanalysts made out. Would stress competence in expressing positive affect (e.g., pleasure, joy) as well as negative affect.

I suspect the only part of this competence is the ability to express feelings verbally. It strikes me as quite a different category from the other competencies when it goes beyond an ability to articulate.

This one puzzles me a bit. The child who can't do this at all would be considered pretty disturbed and not likely to be amenable to "public school" treatment, the child who expresses *too* much is also likely to be seen as disturbed.

This is extremely difficult to assess, for the use of words to express affect or demeanors to express affect are quite independent. Use of words that are emotional may be independent of emotional behaviors. The context is critical and so is the specific emotion, whether it be sadness, joy or anger. This competence is much too general and should be analyzed further. That is, one should aks the child if he understands the meanings of certain affect words and even show him some swatches of color to see if he associates red with anger more than with sadness, blue with sadness more than with anger. Second, one wants to get his comprehension of affect states, which is different from production. Finally, one would want to ask him to role play and see if he could show a facial or postural expression that is appropriate to a child who was sad, angry, lonely, happy, and so on. However, it is very important to keep these various competencies separate.

Illustrate, I should say. I think "demeanor" and "avoidance" may be indistinguishable categories.

There is no evidence of consequence on this topic.

B. Competency: Ability to articulate

Example: To be precise in speech
To be sensitive to vocal inflections
To be sensitive to audience

Suggested Changes:

To speak audibly

To speak comprehensively

To be willing to speak when appropriate

To monitor unnecessary or inappropriate speech

Pronounce words in oral vocabulary correctly (communicably)

Expresses "mood" by vocal inflections (sadness, anger, secrecy, etc.)

To be sensitive to produce vocal inflections

Comments:

How many adults are precise in speech much less 5 year olds. Spell out what is meant - speech sounds, sentence structure, etc. To be sensitive to vocal inflections - his? Sensitive to audience - doesn't seem to fit.

Articulate what? To be sensitive to audience - not clear.

I suspect that being sensitive to vocal inflections may be understood as contributing to articulation development but I think it is not generally understood to be a part of articulation proper. This is one aspect of Ability to discriminate by sound, or at least that is where I would be inclined to place it. To be sensitive to audience really seems to me to be unrelated to articulation in this age range, unless one means simply that the child tries harder to speak clearly when he recognizes that he is not being understood. There is a voluminous literature on precision in speech. It means many things. It will have to be pegged to specifics to be meaningful.

Speech precision has to be approached with great delicacy. Should be taught by example rather than by criticism. Not as important as linguistic advance.

The third example may not be measurable. The second sounds like listening rather than speaking. The

first is a matter of definition - precise is precise and by whose definition?

Sensitive to audience - irrelevant.

This is of some importance, especially in the classroom, and of course engages the problems of the differing dialects in the families from which the children come. I would select a set of relatively general sentences and assess the child's correctness of articulation.

To be precise in speech - variable with age. See D. M. Carthy or Mildred Templin or both.

To be sensitive to vocal inflections - illustrate.

To be sensitive to audience - very hard to define.

This seems too broad for usefulness. Further there is the danger of focusing too much on articulateness and not enough on meaning. This will be encompassed by all other categories. It definitely should not be included if it implies standard English grammar. Sensitivity to inflections comes through role play and expression of feelings. Sensitivity to audience seems a bit sophisticated to six year olds and under. Whatever sensitivity to audience should be done can be done in the social relationships section.

The Harvard Preschool Project found these characteristics to distinguish between well and poorly developing three to six year olds.

C. Competency: Ability to describe (essentially a pictorial concern)

Example: To recognize the salient characters of the things to be described
To use words with precision
To use comparisons

Suggested Changes:

To include salient characteristics in the description
to use modifiers

To make the description meaningful to another

To remember objects and events

Uses words to communicate descriptions of common objects in terms of their attributes - color, shape, size, texture, etc.

Uses words correctly to compare object features, in terms of color, size, etc.

Ability to describe (essentially a visual perceptual concern)

To use words veridically

Comments:

By 72 months the child should further have a clear sense of an action implied in a picture and be able to describe in terms of that action. By this age, he should also be able to entertain descriptive extensions beyond a picture to possible antecedent events and possible outcomes. Likewise, we need specificity for the meaning of using words with precision and we need to know what kinds of comparisons are to be expected as terminal competencies.

Description isn't so important as production. Either change or make a new category emphasizing sheer verbal production.

Okay.

This is almost a pure performance item dependent on the child's linguistic skills and his general shyness or boldness. Many children who have the linguistic capacity cannot describe a pictorial scene because of shyness; others have neither the linguistic nor the temperamental skill. Therefore, it is very important to assess the child's *recognition* of the salient characteristics of a picture as well as his ability to *describe* it. In all of these performance tasks, one

should concordantly assess the child's recognition or comprehension competence. Thus in this case one would ask the child to describe a picture, let us say of a farm scene. If he omits from his description a rooster which is on the picture, one would ask him later if there were any roosters on the picture to determine whether, in fact, he was aware of the object and merely omitted it from his description, or he was unaware of it.

This is general verbal facility?

Possibly should start with simply listing the objects recognized in a pictorial representation.

No evidence I know of.

D. Competency: Ability to explain (essentially a functional concern)

Example: To recognize the dynamics of the operation to be explained
To detail relationships of function
To be aware of audience's familiarity with thing being explained

Suggested Changes:

To suit the explanation to the audience and situation involved.

Gives simple explanations of physical phenomena such as falling, breaking, pushing, etc.

Ability to explain (essentially an operationsl concern)

To be able to ask appropriate questions

Comments:

I take it this means to answer questions of "why" and "how." There are distinct key behaviors in the first as to refer appropriately to antecedent or consequent conditions. Second implies ability to specify critical steps in proper order.

Must be more specific.

Sounds rather fancy!

All of the examples are necessarily relative to the process to be explained. Since gross deficiencies of the third example are evident among adult communications, there is a strong need to be specific here regarding the conditions under which this expectation obtains.

Explanation is important. Logical operations are the basis for its importance.

Not sure what is meant by "functional concern." The example strikes me as being beyond the capabilities of most six year olds.

This competency, too, is much too dependent on the child's command of language and his position on the shyness/boldness dimension. The investigator should also see if the child can *recognize* a good explanation in contrast to a bad one, and not just assess this competence on the basis of the child's speech.

Probably should begin at a lower level such as detailing the part/whole relationships as detailing functional

relationships is a later stage. Again, the awareness of audience familiarity seems rather too sophisticated for the under six year old range.

No evidence I know of.

E. Competency: Ability to label

Example: To realize the importance of labels as a convenience in communicating with others
To realize the connection of function to labeling
To realize that all feelings, conducts, and materials can be labelled

Suggested Changes:

To use labels appropriately

To realize that *most* feelings, conducts, and materials can be labelled

Identifies common objects by name, or by an assigned or agreed upon name

To produce labels isomorphic with reality

Comments:

Objectives given are not adequately defined, and are too general.

The potential for tying this to Ability to form concepts should be exploited in curriculum development.

Labeling as such is not critical except as it is involved in concept formation.

Okay, except the third example is not measurable unless you delete "all."

This is much too vague a competence. Of course the child uses labels; all children do. The important issue is what labels and his understanding of their breadth. This competence needs redefinition. In the simplest sense it is the ability to apply verbal labels to objects, something that is measured by any vocabulary test or picture vocabulary test. In the most abstract sense, it asks the child to realize the importance of labels in communication which I think many 5 year olds do not appreciate.

OK

This again seems too broad and will be included within the context of the more discrete categories. The realization aspect cannot easily be measured except as a child can and does use labels appropriately. Here is where the indication of overlapping levels shows up. Either categories such as ability to label or categories such as distinguish by sight are useful. Confusion results

when the two are used at the same time.

Yes, a standard linguistic research finding, supported by Piaget as well.

F. Competency: Ability to recognize the social functions of language

Example: To realize that language is neither "right" nor "wrong," but rather "appropriate" or "inappropriate" to a given situation
To realize that language has a function other than communication of information, that function being class/character typing

Suggested Changes:

To use language in the service of personal interactions

Comments:

Important for teacher to realize this. But following Walter Lobam, I think effort to teach this to young kids could misfire badly and have opposite effect to that intended. Should be avoided.

Isn't this a conflict with "Ability to articulate?"

Sorry I disagree. Language is either right or wrong. However, what's right in some situations may be wrong in others. "To realize" is thoroughly ambiguous. The aesthetic quality of language should not be overlooked.

This could be taught to children of 60-72 months but should it? What evidence is there that this is beneficial (and in what ways) for children of this age? The implications of these teachable abstractions are beyond the grasp of children at this age. This is all a challenge for secondary students and for college students. Would it not be more appropriate simply to treat this implicitly in terms of models of communications that differentiate among conditions?

This competency should be reworked. Don't like as is, but something in the area belongs here.

The trick words here are recognize and realize. Can they be measured except for inference.

This too is too sophisticated for a six year old and I would omit it from the battery. It would take enormously sensitive interviewing to assess this competence, if indeed it were present.

OK, although very complex.

This is difficult to conceive of as a competency. The rest of the objectives are such that this one will occur.

No evidence I know of.

G. Competency: Ability to use non-verbal cues

Example: To recognize that communication can proceed without the written or spoken word
To become acquainted with common gestures and use them appropriately

Suggested Changes:

Ability to interact, to retell, to make requests, to give instructions, to comprehend ordinary spoken language (instructions, explication, aesthetic materials, such as children's poems, etc.) to interpret what is heard (e.g., make simple translations) to recall what is heard

To communicate through pantomine, to describe through graphic means. Other competencies: Giving and following instructions, communicating feelings, experiences, and to a very limited extent descriptions through graphic means. (Different from ability to draw.)

To recognize posture as a means of communication

To recognize facial expressions of emotion

Grammatical/linguistic competency should be added, and also there should be something having to do with competency in simple engaging in verbal output. I would perhaps add the effective use of inquiry (i.e., question asking) as a third new competency

To recognize that some communication can proceed without the written word

To make use of common hand and arm gestures

To recognize and use facial gestures as a mode of communication

Comments:

Considered quite unnecessary and unimportant.

These examples do suggest a valuable area. The second seems to come close to good operational language. The first remains abstract and states something about a concept which the child will form rather than specifying in operational terms how the ability shall be observed in operation. To these should surely be added a statement regarding ability to recognize facial expressions of emotion. Posture too communicates nonverbally and deserves minor attention as an indicator of mood, arousal level (alertness), and sometimes of social orientation.

Excellent category.

Again, I wonder about the problem of measurement. I have no quarrel with it as a measurement.

This is a very important competence and should be tried. I think that one would want to have pictures and gestures of people and ask the child to read, diagnose, or label the intention of the person displaying the non-verbal communication. I also think it is a good idea to have some common gestures people use for *no*, for *yes*, for *anger*, for *irritation*, or for *joy*, and see if the child understands their meaning the way he understands the meanings of words.

Exemplify, I believe. This, I think, is universal and "automatic."

Suggest omitting as a competency. Most very young children use nonverbal cues well. If not other areas will include the items listed under this category and will presume the use of cues.

No evidence I know of.

III. Category: Coordination

A. Competency: Ability to construct

Example: To be aware of the relationships of parts to the whole
To assess materials
To use materials

Suggested Changes:

To construct so that relationships between parts and whole are clear

To assess appropriateness of materials for various constructions

To use materials such as pencil, crayons, scissors, paste, mosaics, clay

Assessing materials should include knowing when cutting, pasting, folding, moulding, etc. are needed to achieve a desired effect.

Constructs simple geometrical shapes by placing parts together

Constructs structures with blocks

Comments:

Too broad: to assess materials - to use materials.

With what kinds of materials? What does it mean to assess materials? The first example suggests principles of composition. I have some concern about its inclusion, since it suggests a possible imposition upon the child of some extrinsic principles of composition rather than a reliance upon his own expression. Did that example get intruded into this competency because of the worthy objectives that the child shall learn visually to see analytically the whole and its constituent parts and their interrelationships? I would tend instead to place the first example above under another category which would deal with ability to perceive composition of a visual arrangement. That would preclude the danger of its being imposed upon the child's actual construction per se. That would logically be placeable in this next category.

I do not really know what an "ability to construct" is. If it is meant to build or integrate tangible materials, I seriously question there is such a unitary "ability." Delete.

Sorry to keep harping on this but the question that occurs is, construct what? Origami? This is a competence that Japanese children have developed to a remarkable degree by six but our kids don't have that. How would you assess example one? Again, I think you must be more specific.

The problem here will likely be related to the complexity of the "whole." The more functionally (or aesthetically) relevant parts - the more difficult the construction.

This performance will depend always on the specific materials used, their familiarity, their sex-typing, their difficulty, and their interest value. I would want to be very specific here and see if the child can construct, for example, a particular model using blocks (with a model in front of the child), ability to put a puzzle together, ability to make something out of clay - always being sensitive to familiarity and interest value.

Too general. Examples, illustrations, breaking down necessary.

Suggest omitting. This seems to be a generalization which fits better into specific situations. Construction should be a tool to learn spatial relationships or small muscle development, etc.

A Preschool Project distinguishing dimension of competence in three to six year olds.

B. Competency: Ability to copy

Example: To develop eye-hand coordination
To comprehend design

Suggested Changes:

To copy simple figures and poems

To mimic sounds

To imitate gestures and movements

Copies simple geometrical shapes and designs

Copies irregular shapes and designs

Omit: to comprehend design

Comments:

Copying abilities of 5's are poorly developed.

Ability to copy is also a function of conceptual development. So it is not a simple derivative of visual-motor coordination. The whole area of visual-motor planning comes into this too and is not adequately represented when we view the entire competency function simply as imitative or ability to copy, since greater accommodative function is required than implied to copy. These complexities suggest to me the need to reconceptualize this category consistently with your curriculum objectives. If we view copying as a pure factor kind of action, we will prescribe more copying experience. How wrong that decision can be if the child needs specific help in motor planning development, etc.

This competency has some slight place in the scheme of things. But it occupies low priority to my way of thinking.

Okay if the design is specified but again it is a matter of how competent. The second example seems to me not to be an instance of competency.

There are many types of copying. Might include dance, musical instruments, etc.

This, too, is important to assess using designs both for familiar and unfamiliar objects. But it is important never to confuse an inability to copy with a deficit in perceptual discrimination. That is to say, many children who cannot draw Bender, Gestault designs are able to discriminate them. Therefore, one would always

want to coordinate a perceptual discrimination test for the objects that are being copied so that one can assign poor performance, when it occurs, to the inability to display fine motor coordination rather than to a perceptual deficit.

More detail needed, although basic idea okay.

This together with ability to draw represent what might be termed the use of intermediary tools in which follow the dot, cutting out around a shape, copying of designs, drawing of recognizable forms, using hammer and nails all might be activities.

Eye-hand coordination develops quite well with a minimum of help from the environment. It is not a widespread educational problem.

C. Competency: Ability to draw

Example: To conceive and hold mental pictures
To develop eye-hand coordination
To comprehend design

Suggested Changes:

To produce recognizable pictures

Omit: eye-hand coordination and comprehend design

Draws simple shapes and object forms when objects are first observed, then removed

Draws common geometrical shapes (square, triangle, circle, ellipse, etc.)

To conceive and hold mental pictures - To develop eye-hand coordination - To demonstrate basic principles of design

Comments:

Drawing abilities of 5's are poorly developed.

The competency name seems to me to require another major category, because it refers to certain interiorized processes more directly as in the example of conceiving and holding mental pictures. I would view drawing as less imitative and more imaginal and intentional. This may lead again to a problem which I pointed up under ability to construct: it leads us to concentrate excessively upon the realism of the product. Who in the field of fine art or of children's art emphasize the opposite. Would it not be better to recognize the role of imagination and its development by making of it a separate category, and then to recognize that if our concern is realism, drawing is only a form of copying--not another something. To conceive and hold mental pictures would then require its own major category heading. That heading would deal with the interiorization of visual accommodations and the formation of visual imagery. Visual memory is a part of that kind of process rather than the servant of drawing.

OK

Example two is okay. The first and third may not be measurable.

At age six this will even still be pretty crude approximations to what it could be at eight or ten. Very few will do without much instruction. I doubt that one could expect it as a part of "normal" development.

I do not regard this of high priority but it should be tried. Again, as with the ability to copy, it is important not to confuse the child's memory or perceptual clarity of an object with his drawing skill, *per se*.

Fine, but more detail needed.

No evidence I know of here.

D. Competency: Ability to use body to express feelings

Example: To recognize effect of physical gestures on others
To dance
To accept body movements as a respectable form of expression

Suggested Changes:

Repetitive. Probably belongs here rather than under communication

Identifies common physical gestures (threatening, pleading, rejecting, etc.)

Executes simple rhythmical dances

Unnecessary

Gesture, dance, and movement are excellent competency objectives. Change "to accept" to "to develop." Use of gesture should be included in examples.

To take the roles of various objects

To try to communicate various intentions with his body

Comments:

This competency harks back to communication: Ability to use non-verbal cues. Parts of it seem to belong there instead of here. It could fit under coordination with the following qualification: Ability to use body movement to the extent required to permit effective non-verbal communication through posture, gesture, and movement. Facial expression need not be subsumed under this, since the facial muscles appear to operate to express the primary emotions without the intervention of specific training procedures, although retraining might benefit some who have been trained to distort or suppress facial expressions. "To accept. . ." belongs under habits and attitudes.

I do not think this is of the highest priority, although I would not be opposed to a test in which a child were asked to act out with his body various emotions, to take the role of various objects (like waterfalls or fires), and to try to communicate various intentions with his body.

Overlaps with communication - use of non-verbal cues.

???Not sure about this category. In these days of study of body language, o.k., I'm sure.

This competency might together comprise a Control of Large Muscles with examples of dancing, running, climbing, surmounting obstacles, recognition of body movements as symbolic gestures through such things as stance and flight would be a part. Control does not mean restriction but the ability to make happen what you want to happen.

No evidence I know of here.

E. Competency: Ability to control large muscles

Example: To balance
To move in the way one wants to

Suggested Changes:

To avoid excessive clumsiness

Makes movements of whole body or of limbs in response to oral directions

To move objects the way one wants to

Comments:

Important developmental task of kids of this age seem to be acquiring cognitive control of movement, e.g., to take two steps sideways and then stop (they tend to keep going).

To balance (state how).

Is this balance to be determined statically or dynamically? Evidence favors the latter over the former as a more sensitive indicator of development. But the examples here are necessarily general in view of the incredible number of transitions and stages evident in this area from 0-72 months. An adequate set of examples for this would actually be longer than the totality of examples which you have used in the entire list of competencies. That, for a preschool or other early childhood program is the essential challenge--to designate that comprehensive list of behaviors, their sequence, and to order experiences appropriate to fostering advances in development at each level.

Traditional objective, but OK. Additional examples could include climbing, making wheeled vehicles work, construction of large materials, etc.

Again, a matter of definition and specificity.

This is a good and important skill but should not be confounded with the danger of the task, as might be involved in balancing, riding a bicycle fast or a trampoline. Some children who have fear of physical harm show an inability to control their large muscles in those tasks where they might be hurt, but in safer tasks show better coordination.

To balance - where, how? To move in the ways one wants to - okay.

No evidence I know of here.

F. Competency: Ability to control small muscles

Example: To manipulate small objects with hands and fingers
To develop eye-hand coordination
To use many parts of the body simultaneously

Suggested Changes:

Crossed out "To develop eye-hand coordination."

To use many parts of the body simultaneously in coordinate action

To have some graphic skills

In response to verbal directions, manipulate small objects and parts by reversing, inserting, opening, etc.

Uses simple hand tools such as hammer, screw driver, wrench

To understand that one's movements have specific effects which often furnish feedback for further movement

Comments:

To use many parts of the body simultaneously - Irrelevant.

This competency ought to be thought of as closely allied to ability to copy, since prehension and manipulation must normally precede reproduction with crayon. The third example is too general to belong here. It may refer to gross, fine, and fine-gross coordination.

This is extremely complex and the competency display will depend on the specific tasks chosen.

Specify.

OK, but is also related to the copy-draw section. In some ways this represents another kind of problem in the list which I have not addressed very carefully and that is that some of these items represent different age or developmental levels in relationship to some major kind of control such as this category represents in some form the earlier manifestation of a kind of behavior control that copying and drawing does at a later stage.

No evidence I know of here.

IV. Category: Habits and Attitudes

A. Competency: Ability to initiate action

Example: To realize when an action would improve existing conditions.
To know the range and probable results of actions

Suggested Changes:

To be willing to initiate action

To be curious and want to explore the environment

In response to oral directions, carries out simple actions of two or three steps

Demonstrate the outcomes (or probable outcomes) of actions

To accept and initiate affective feedback about when conditions are not satisfying

To develop knowledge about means-ends relations

Comments:

Five year olds have only limited ability to do this.

Examples are ambiguous, no meaning.

I cannot image this competency as stated leading to curriculum, although I cannot doubt its importance. The competencies which underlie initiative would need to become the curricular foci. These might include (a) aspects of psycho-social development (i.e., Erikson's initiative-guilt stage); (b) affective feedback about when conditions are not satisfying; (c) knowledge of means-end relations (Tolman) etc. I do not find it a functional competency for your purposes in its stated form.

To initiate action is an important component of instrumental competence.

I agree with the idea but is this an abiltiy? Doesn't every child initiate some action simply to get through the day. Can you measure when he "realizes" or when "an action would improve existing conditions?" For example, would going to the bathroom be an instance? I don't mean to be facetious but only to illustrate how difficult to know when competency is exhibited.

Do limits need specified here? As it stands the competency is so broad that almost anything could be used

to demonstrate its acquisition.

This is much too general a description and I think much too difficult to assess if one wants to know the range of results of actions or to assess whether the child realizes when an action would improve existing conditions. At that level, I do not think you can assess this with sensitivity in a 5 or 6 year old, and think we should omit it.

So general as not to be very meaningful.

Who knows?

B. Competency: Ability to plan action

Example: To make choices based on the dynamics of a given situation
To assess resources
To anticipate end results

Suggested Changes:

Plans a set of actions involving 2 or 3 separate steps to accomplish a stated goal

Forecasts end results of actions

Comments:

To make choices based on the *dynamics of a given situation* - doubtful.

In looking at this one, we get into the variable of conceptual tempo and analytic style of thinking (Kagan) and we must recognize that the child'd ability to plan action may be shortcircuited by impulsivity. For the latter portions of this age range, it would be appropriate to include (under coordination?) aspects of motor impulse control.

Good objective. Emphasize means-end relations in the examples.

Sounds too complicated for most preschoolers.

Again-limits are the problem.

This is a good and important competency. The ability to plan is very specific to specific problem situations. It is not a unitary ability. Therefore, it is important that one sample a wide array of tasks. All the way from the child's realization that he should study an array of pictures longer if he has to remember it for six hours than if he has to remember it for one minute, to a construction task where he should delay longer to plan a difficult construction than to plan a simple one. One should have at least five or six different problem situations, for the correlation among tests of planfulness may be low.

Aren't these examples merely general intelligence?

Supported by Preschool Project research.

C. Competency: Ability to persist in actions

Example: To increase attention span
To recognize correlation between time spent and results achieved
To recognize interim successes

Suggested Changes:

To control attention span and level of concentration in terms of task requirements

To be willing to abandon an unproductive activity

Persists in tasks in presence of distractions

Identifies interim accomplishments related to more complete goals

To complete long term projects

To increase attention span appropriately

Comments:

To recognize interim successes - implies long range goals which I doubt.

Specify tasks.

As I understand Thomas, Chess, and Birch (and have taught their temperament observations system to my students) persistence and distractibility are quite stable individual characteristics by 6 months and onward. The statement of this as a competency seems to me to miss where the current research trends lead. It is more the task of the adult to work within the framework of the child's given persistence and distractibility by arrangement of the environment to predict suitable conditions. How do I believe this area is a proper one for educational intervention, however, is via stimulation of interest development and secondly through forms of imaginative play which increase the probability of intrinsic attentional control. These approaches probably can help a temperamentally non-persistent child become more persistent.

Another good objective. Give example which stresses persistence in the face of frustration and failure.

Competence okay but not sure about examples two and three.

Again, this is highly dependent on the task, its interest value, its familiarity, the child's expectancy of success, and its sex typing. It would be dangerous to

only have one problem situation here and assess the child's persistence in that task.

Very general and not too helpful.

I question the relationship between time spent and results achieved. (I've spent a good bit of time on this report, but without more experience in the field, the results are limited.) But I could see a sequence which involved increasing attention span, development of subgoals and recognition of end-results as success or failure. But again persistence is achieved only in relation to something and there is evidence to suggest that even very young babies have a long attention span to the things which interest them. This might mean only that there is a burden on the teacher - home visitor to assess and provide materials of interest.

No evidence I know of.

D. Competency: Ability to be self-reliant

Example: To know one's own abilities
To accurately assess one's work
To realize that others cannot always be counted on for help

Suggested Changes:

To recognize when it is appropriate and/or important to seek help

To know appropriate sources of help (e.g., adults, other children, community services)

To know how to summon help (e.g., by telephone) in an emergency

Makes reasonable accurate estimates of own abilities in motor and cognitive tasks

Identifies discrepancies between own work and given goals

Comments:

To realize that others cannot always be counted on for help-easily misinterpreted.

Inappropriate.

I think with this we need to recognize another major psycho-social task of development in what Erikson calls autonomy vs. shame. To develop successful in this area, it appears from a variety of clinical and developmental evidence that the child must also first have experience acceptance/nurturence. I fear that the statement of the competency in this form may lead us to miss the process by which one comes to be self-reliant. A second area which contributes to self-reliance appears to be competency. As we have dealt adequately through classification and coordination competencies with the skills for self-reliance, this much will be assured, so belongs less here as a separate category than as an outgrowth of skills and an outgrowth of interpersonal relationships.

Excellent choice. Again this is a component of instrumental competence.

Doubtful.

This probably needs a happy balance--too much would be seen as antisocial which carries as much connotation as being too reliant on others.

Again this depends very much on the task one uses and is very hard to assess. I would omit this from the battery, although I think it is important.

Again, specification and illustration needed.

The section about planning and implementing action appears to me to be related to establishing independence or self-reliance. Working toward getting children to be independent is important and may be best accomplished and evaluated through the planning and initiating action sequence.

No evidence I know of.

E. Competency: Ability to sustain health and safety

Example: To recognize what is beneficial and detrimental to health
To see the connection of good physical health to effective mental activity
To realize that prevention of illness is primary to being healthy
To recognize appropriate social behaviors

Suggested Changes:

Crossed out second example

To realize that it is important to try to prevent illness

Crossed out last example

To meet common standards for peer group in cleanliness, hygiene, bladder and bowel control

To eat fairly sensible

To maintain good sleeping habits

To dress appropriately for the weather

To play safely and to follow good safety practices in day-to-day activities

Identifies common symptoms of illness or infection such as raised temperature, swelling, inflammation, etc.

To wear clean clothing. To not wear other's just-worn clothing. To wash before eating. To go to the toilet on time, etc.

Comments:

First three examples - Not 5 year old behavior.
Fourth example - belongs somewhere else.

Specify what facts about health are to be learned.

To me the examples sound too abstract and verbal for preschoolers. In these areas we can say that the child learns what he lives and sees. I know of no evidence that these conceptions arise apart from living where sound health habits are practiced and enforced, nor do I know of evidence that would suggest that the verbalized concepts in any manner alter the habits which have been learned. The verbalization and abstraction of the practices seems to me to belong more properly to the child's later education after he

has lived around sound health practices. Then the education leads to the formal operationalization of what before has been preconceptual or only concretely operational.

Health education occupies only a modest place in good preschool curricula. Objectives here are too sophisticated. Elementary physiological facts could be added as an objective. One major objective could be striving for excellence (not "to be best" but to be "good," according to objective standards).

At age six? Maybe, but at a pretty rudimentary level.

This is interesting and should be assessed primarily through careful interview rather than through watching overt behavior.

Very general. Appropriate before about age 11? Not sure.

These ideas appear to me to be a level at which many adults do not function and appropriate social behavior is covered elsewhere.

Example four doesn't seem to be related to examples one through three, and again I know of no substantial evidence on these attributes.

V. Category: Social Relationships

A. Competency: Ability to assume appropriate social behaviors

Example: To listen and follow directions
To work with others for a common goal
To converse well

Suggested Changes:

To appreciate the various roles that adults and children are called upon to play

To regulate antisocial behavior in himself through moderation, redirection (*not* repression)

To understand the principles underlying acceptable group behavior

Follows direction given by another classmate in pursuit of an accepted goal

Works cooperatively toward a common goal by division of labor, etc.

Gives communicable directions to others in pursuing a common goal

To use imaginative language in play

To make positive overtures to others

Comments:

For the first two examples, it will be important to state the conditions under which they are to be observed. Cooperation is never notable in an environment filled with cues for competition. Directions may be given inconsiderately with regard to the child's degree of involvement in ongoing activity, etc. At this age, to converse well seems a less adaptive social skill than does the imaginative use of language in play. I would more opt for the latter on the basis of available evidence, letting conversation assume its place in communication.

Excellent. Would add "how to make positive overtures to others" as an example.

The problem is the word "appropriate." Example three overlaps with communication.

The three examples given are quite different and tap markedly different abilities. That is to say, the ability to listen is much different from the ability

to work with others which is different from the ability to converse well. These must be separated and I would vote for separate assessments of each.

Specification and age "norming" needed.

Conversing well from this section and the ability to get and maintain attention seem to me to be interrelated. Such ideas as answering questions, asking questions, maintaining eye contact, playing and talking with others would work well together. Working toward a common goal is such a complicated notion that I wonder if it can be included. Possibly only after the part about adopting the perspective of another.

Again, no evidence I know of.

B. Competency: Ability to get attention

Example: To role play
To ask questions
To manifest a sense of urgency

Suggested Changes:

Ability to get attention when necessary

Crossed out "To role play"

Evokes interest in others by playing a role (teacher, physician, etc.)

Obtains information from others by asking questions

Stimulates co-workers by manifesting a sense of urgency

Comments:

Establish social contact?

I do not understand to role play as an example of this competency. So I cannot comment on it. Sears, Rau, and Alpert's work suggests that by 72 months we might add positive forms of attention getting through performance.

Getting attention is of minimal importance other than the fact that it is involved in appropriate social activity.

Okay.

Should this include a statement related to appropriateness? Sometimes the child will be very good at getting attention but it is at the wrong time.

These are quite different abilities, as in the example above, and all are not necessarily aimed at getting attention. A child who asks questions is sometimes after information, is sometimes after attention, is sometimes bored. Thus one should take into account the adaptive value and the intention of the child.

Specify, illustrate with age appropriate behavior.

Preschool Project evidence for this one.

C. Competency: Ability to maintain attention

Example: To be direct
To be sincere
To maintain eye contact

Suggested Changes:

Holds attention of others by effective communication techniques, avoiding threats

To convey the message (?)

To sustain on a task or an event

Comments:

Ability to maintain attention - whose?

Much of this relates clinically to ability to be self-reliant. Only the child who has attained autonomy can face another person directly and with eye contact without shame. We must distinguish competencies from concommitant variables such as the above examples represent. On the other hand, to be sincere is a worthy objective, but perhaps less germane to maintaining attention, since sincerity has always seemed to me a hallmark of children. Guile more commonly appears with increasing sophistication at older ages.

Techniques for maintaining interaction are important. I am not sure that "sincerity" isn't too sophisticated a concept for preschoolers, though.

Doubtful. Sounds too premeditated.

As with the ability to get attention, these examples are different entities with different origins. The ability to be direct with another person is not necessarily correlated with the ability to be sincere or to maintain eye contact. I would have thought it better to see if a child will maintain sustained attention on a task or an event, rather than tap sincerity. Here we should have a game, object, or enterprise that engages the child's interest and code whether he will maintain his attention on this task.

First two not clear. Number three - okay.

Preschool Project evidence for this one.

12

D. Competency: Ability to adopt the perspective of another

Example: To role play
To put oneself in the conditions of others
To play with and talk to others

Suggested Changes:

To verbalize about another's situation. This is a difficult and important notion. However, if left in, the example of "to put oneself in the condition of another" is the same as the title of this section. Perhaps "being able to verbalize about another's situation" would be a useful example.

Comments:

To put oneself in the conditions of others - Not consistent with 5 year old behavior.

What roles? Identifies the conditions of others in relation to achievement of group goals.

This is a good clean competency within social relationships, probably less contaminated by other considerations directly, although its failure is common among children who fail to attain competency in the other major psycho-social tasks of early childhood. Another issue, however, is whether one can train to this in the absence of success in the major psycho-social tasks. I for one would be willing to see it attempted, particularly through role playing in play as an antidote to earlier failures of fundamental interpersonal relations. Role play would then be the vehicle as much as it would be an example of the competency. Social play would be an ideal area in which to view the competency. Yet until childhood proper, the perception of others motives lags and prevents full manifestation of the competency.

Very good.

Okay.

This is a very important competency and will, of course, depend on the instructions and the specific context. One must vary the role the child is in and the conditions of the testing. It will be difficult to assess this from overt behavior and it will be necessary to construct very special test.

Okay, I think.

Preschool Project evidence for this one.

E. Competency: Ability to respect the individuality of others

Example: To tolerate visible differences in others
To express admiration for the differences of others
To express concern over the differences of others

Suggested Changes:

To express admiration for others when admiration is appropriate

To reject clearly antisocial behavior in others

To discriminate without having to judge

Chooses personal actions toward others independently of physical differences

To recognize differences within broad racial or social categories

Comments:

Examples seem to miss the point. Last two sound like thought control. I think the main thing is to recognize the different/better or worse. Hence to discriminate without having to judge.

I disagree violently with your decision to eliminate the category of "self-concept." There is great danger in an approach which sets definite standards of behavior if the adults who are responsible for guiding the child are not sensitive to what kind of help to give and when. It is quite possible to accomplish competencies in some areas while negatively affecting self-concept. Adults are not necessarily aware of the symptoms. The category "self-concept" must be here to provide the balance despite the difficulties of developing such a concept.

I had thought from my reading of the literature on this topic that preschoolers virtually all have it and that the fundamental problem is how to get adults to stop socializing it out of them. The second example sounds a bit abstract. I think that this must be exampled at this age level almost exclusively in terms of admiration of their internal qualities. These specific constraints of observation ought to be made clear.

Sensitivity to individual differences is a good objective. I would not use the word "tolerate." An additional objective is to acquire perceptual differentiation which will *permit* acknowledgement of differences *within* broad racial or social categories of people by those who are not members of the category.

Doubtful.

I think this is much too difficult to assess in children of this age.

Very general. Will have to be specified and illustrated.

The idea of respecting the individuality of another might be the first example in a social relationships item and would properly begin with recognition of the individuality of the child himself. Only then can the child begin to work on the individuality of others. Children express concern over differences rather early and may not be needed as a step in the process. Learning to deal with concern and accept differences is more appropriate as a goal than expressing concern.

No evidence I know of.

NATIONAL PANEL

of

CHILD DEVELOPMENT SCHOLARS

Abramovitz, Robert
Assistant Professor
Yale Child Study Center
Yale University
333 Cedar Street
New Haven, Connecticut 06519

*Anderson, Scarvia
Southern Regional Division
Educational Testing Service
17 Executive Park Drive, NE
Atlanta, Georgia 30329

*Bereiter, Carl
Center for Advanced Study in the
Behavioral Sciences
202 Junipero Serra Boulevard
Stanford, California 94305

Brudenel, Gerald
Assistant Professor
Early Childhood Education Program
College of Education
Division of Professional and
Clinical Programs
The Florida State University
Tallahassee, Florida 32306

*Butler, Annie
Professor of Education
Education #326
School of Education
Indiana University
Bloomington, Indiana 47401

*Gagne, Robert
Professor of Educational Research
Center for Education Technology
The Florida State University
415 N. Monroe Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32301

*Gotts, Edward
Professor of Education
School of Education
Indiana University
Bloomington, Indiana 47401

*Hartup, Willard
Director
Institute of Child Development
University of Minnesota
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455

Hess, Robert
Professor of Education
School of Education
Stanford University
Palo Alto, California 94305

*Hunt, J. McVicker
Professor of Psychology and
Elementary Education
Room 617, Psychology Building
University of Illinois
Champaign-Urbana, Illinois 61801

*Jester, Emile
Associate Professor of Education
Acting Director, Institute of
Human Resources
College of Education
513 Weil Hall
University of Florida
Gainesville, Florida 32601

*Kagan, Jerome
Professor of Developmental Psychology
Room 510
William James Hall
Harvard University
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138

Katz, Lilian
Professor of Education
Director, ERIC, Early Childhood
Education
805 W. Pennsylvania Avenue
University of Illinois
Champaign-Urbana, Illinois 61801

McCandless, Boyd
Professor of Psychology
Director of Developmental Psychology
Emory University
2469 Greenglade Road, NE
Atlanta, Georgia 30345

*Schoggen, Maxine
Research Associate
John F. Kennedy Center
Research in Education and Human
Development
Peabody College
Nashville, Tennessee 37203

Shipman, Virginia
Educational Testing Service
Princeton, New Jersey 08540

*White, Burton
Lecturer and Senior Research
Associate
Graduate School of Education
Harvard University
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138

White, Sheldon
Professor of Psychology
Department of Psychology and
Social Relations
Harvard University
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138

*Respondents to the rating instrument.

APPALACHIAN PANEL

of

CHILD DEVELOPMENT SCHOLARS

*Aderhold, Elizabeth
Assistant Professor of Early Childhood Education
427 F College of Education
University of Georgia
Athens, Georgia 30602

*Berry, Mary
Professor of Education
Box 296
School of Education
Middle Tennessee State University
Murphreesboro, Tennessee 37130

*Brunk, Jason
Director
The Early Childhood Institute
College of Education
Ohio University
Athens, Ohio 45701

*Cagle, Lynn
Assistant Professor of Early Childhood Education
Department of Curriculum and Instruction
Claxton Education Building
University of Tennessee
Knoxville, Tennessee 37916

*Cowles, Milly
Professor of Early Childhood Education
School of Education
University of Alabama
Birmingham, Alabama 35294

*Day, Barbara
Coordinator of Early Childhood Programs
Assistant Professor of Education
School of Education
302 Peabody Hall
University of North Carolina
Chapel Hill, North Carolina 27514

*Deal, Therry
Chairman
Department of Home Economics
Georgia College
Milledgeville, Georgia 31061

*Harper, Mary
Director
Early Childhood Education Continuous Progress Program
Williamsburg County
417 School Street
Kingston, South Carolina 29556

*Hart, Lillian
Assistant Professor of Early Childhood Education
Department of Elementary Education
Memphis State University
Memphis, Tennessee 38152

*Kamara, Barbara
Director
Learning Institute of North Carolina
Child Development Training Center
800 Silver Avenue
Greensboro, North Carolina 27403

Looff, David
Associate Clinical Professor of Child Psychiatry
University of Kentucky
1308 Fincastle Road
Lexington, Kentucky 40502

*Stapleton, Pat
Training Specialist
Center for Leadership Development for Child Care
University of North Carolina
Greensboro, North Carolina 27412

*Wear, Pat
Chairman
Department of Education
Box 2288
Berea College
Berea, Kentucky 40403

*Respondents to the rating instrument.

AN EARLY CHILDHOOD COMPETENCY RATING INSTRUMENT

I. Category: Classification

I. A. Competency: Ability to form concepts

Examples:	Strongly supportive	Slightly supportive	No evidence	Slightly nonsupportive	Strongly nonsupportive
1. To recognize similarities or differences of objects and/or events	5	4	3	2	1
2. To understand the nature of the similarities and differences of objects and/or events	5	4	3	2	1
3. To establish and label conceptual groups	5	4	3	2	1
4. To verbalize principles underlying categories	5	4	3	2	1
5. To generalize from one situation to another	5	4	3	2	1
A. Competency: Ability to form concepts	5	4	3	2	1

Comments: _____

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I. B. Competency: Ability to discriminate by sound

Examples:	Strongly supportive	Slightly supportive	No evidence	Slightly nonsupportive	Strongly nonsupportive
1. To distinguish characteristics of sound	5	4	3	2	1
2. To identify sources of sound by name and/or distinction	5	4	3	2	1
3. Reproduces simple rhythmical patterns	5	4	3	2	1
4. To analyze oral forms into constituent parts	5	4	3	2	1
5. To identify and distinguish tones	5	4	3	2	1

B. Competency: Ability to discriminate by sound 5 4 3 2 1

Comments: _____

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I. C. Competency: Ability to discriminate by sight

	Strongly supportive	Slightly supportive	No evidence	Slightly nonsupportive	Strongly nonsupportive
Examples:					
1. To distinguish size using recognition, matching, and labeling	5	4	3	2	1
2. To distinguish shapes using recognition, matching, and labeling	5	4	3	2	1
3. To distinguish color using recognition, matching, and labeling	5	4	3	2	1
4. To distinguish letters and some simple words	5	4	3	2	1
5. To perceive organized form distinct from its background	5	4	3	2	1
C. Competency: Ability to discriminate by sight	5	4	3	2	1

Comments: _____

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I. D. Competency: Ability to discriminate by touch

Examples:	Strongly supportive	Slightly supportive	No evidence	Slightly nonsupportive	Strongly nonsupportive
1. To distinguish temperature	5	4	3	2	1
2. To distinguish shapes	5	4	3	2	1
3. To distinguish functional objects	5	4	3	2	1
4. To identify texture of material as smooth, slippery, etc.	5	4	3	2	1
5. To distinguish hotter and cooler temperatures of surfaces, liquids	5	4	3	2	1

D. Competency: Ability to discriminate by touch	5	4	3	2	1

Comments: _____

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I. E. Competency: Ability to sort

Examples:	Strongly supportive	Slightly supportive	No evidence	Slightly nonsupportive	Strongly nonsupportive
1. To recognize similar qualities in different objects	5	4	3	2	1
2. To recognize similar functions and relationships in different objects	5	4	3	2	1
3. To provide descriptions while sorting	5	4	3	2	1
4. To label the group of objects	5	4	3	2	1
E. Competency: Ability to sort	5	4	3	2	1

Comments: _____

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I. F. Competency: Ability to ordinate

Examples:	Strongly supportive	Slightly supportive	No evidence	Slightly nonsupportive	Strongly nonsupportive
1. Arrange objects in sequence according to size, numerousness, and time	5	4	3	2	1
2. To establish one-to-one correspondence with recognition, matching, and labeling	5	4	3	2	1
3. To identify positional relationships	5	4	3	2	1
4. To have elementary notions of inclusion and exclusion	5	4	3	2	1
5. To establish set-numeral relationships	5	4	3	2	1
F. Competency: Ability to ordinate	5	4	3	2	1

Comments: _____

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I. G. Competency: Ability to conserve

	Strongly supportive	Slightly supportive	No evidence	Slightly nonsupportive	Strongly nonsupportive
Examples:					
1. Separates objects in groups to achieve one-to-one matches	5	4	3	2	1
2. To distinguish quantity under various transformations	5	4	3	2	1
3. To identify larger and smaller pairs of objects	5	4	3	2	1
4. To conserve number	5	4	3	2	1
G. Competency: Ability to conserve	5	4	3	2	1

Comments: _____

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I. H. Competency: Ability to measure

	Strongly supportive	Slightly supportive	No evidence	Slightly nonsupportive	Strongly nonsupportive
Examples:					
1. To distinguish time (longer and shorter intervals)	5	4	3	2	1
2. To distinguish weight (heavier and lighter)	5	4	3	2	1
3. To distinguish distance (longer and shorter)	5	4	3	2	1
4. To distinguish measurement (units and instrument's functions)	5	4	3	2	1
5. To distinguish value (Money)	5	4	3	2	1
H. Competency: Ability to measure	5	4	3	2	1

Comments: _____

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I. I. Competency: Ability to denote spatial relationships

Examples:	Strongly supportive	Slightly supportive	No evidence	Slightly nonsupportive	Strongly nonsupportive
1. To distinguish the relative orientation of an object in space	5	4	3	2	1
2. To identify directions of motion of objects--going away, coming towards, ascending, descending, etc.	5	4	3	2	1
3. To establish part/whole relationships	5	4	3	2	1
4. To recognize cross-modal transfer	5	4	3	2	1
5. To recognize physical causality	5	4	3	2	1
6. To establish left/right orientation	5	4	3	2	1

I. Competency: Ability to denote spatial relationships 5 4 3 2 1

Comments: _____

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I. Category: Classification 5 4 3 2 1

II. Category: Communication

II. A. Competency: Ability to recognize the social functions of language

Examples:	Strongly supportive	Slightly supportive	No evidence	Slightly nonsupportive	Strongly nonsupportive
1. To realize that language is neither "right" nor "wrong," but rather "appropriate" or "inappropriate" to a given situation	5	4	3	2	1
2. To realize that language has a function other than communication of information, that function being class/character typing	5	4	3	2	1
3. To use language in the service of personal interactions	5	4	3	2	1

A. Competency: Ability to recognize the social functions of language	5	4	3	2	1

Comments: _____

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II. B. Competency: Ability to label

	Strongly supportive	Slightly supportive	No evidence	Slightly nonsupportive	Strongly nonsupportive
Examples:					
1. To realize the importance of labels as a convenience in communicating with others	5	4	3	2	1
2. To realize that most feelings, conducts, and materials can be labeled	5	4	3	2	1
3. Identifies common objects by name, or by an assigned or agreed upon name	5	4	3	2	1
4. To produce labels isomorphic with reality	5	4	3	2	1
B. Competency: Ability to label	5	4	3	2	1

Comments: _____

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II. C. Competency: Ability to explain (essentially a functional concern)

Examples:	Strongly supportive	Slightly supportive	No evidence	Slightly nonsupportive	Strongly nonsupportive
1. To recognize the dynamics of the operation to be explained	5	4	3	2	1
2. To detail relationships of functions	5	4	3	2	1
3. To suit the explanation to the audience and situation involved	5	4	3	2	1
4. Gives simple explanations of physical phenomena such as falling, breaking, pushing, etc.	5	4	3	2	1
5. To be able to ask appropriate questions	5	4	3	2	1

C. Competency: Ability to explain (essentially a functional concern) 5 4 3 2 1

Comments: _____

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II. D. Competency: Ability to describe (essentially a pictorial concern)

	Strongly supportive	Slightly supportive	No evidence	Slightly nonsupportive	Strongly nonsupportive
Examples:					
1. To make the description meaningful to another	5	4	3	2	1
2. To remember objects and events	5	4	3	2	1
3. Uses words to communicate descriptions of common objects in terms of their attributes - color, shape, size, texture, etc.	5	4	3	2	1
4. Uses words correctly to compare object features, in terms of color, size, etc.	5	4	3	2	1
D. Competency: Ability to describe (essentially a pictorial concern)	5	4	3	2	1

Comments: _____

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II. E. Competency: Ability to articulate

Examples:	Strongly supportive	Slightly supportive	No evidence	Slightly nonsupportive	Strongly nonsupportive
1. To speak audibly	5	4	3	2	1
2. To speak comprehensively	5	4	3	2	1
3. To be willing to speak when appropriate	5	4	3	2	1
4. To monitor unnecessary or inappropriate speech	5	4	3	2	1
5. Pronounce words in oral vocabulary correctly (communicably)	5	4	3	2	1
6. Expresses "mood" by vocal inflections (sadness, anger, secrecy, etc.)	5	4	3	2	1
E. Competency: Ability to articulate	5	4	3	2	1

Comments: _____

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II. F. Competency: Ability to express feelings

Examples:	Strongly supportive	Slightly supportive	No evidence	Slightly nonsupportive	Strongly nonsupportive
1. Identifies common emotional expressions in other persons, e.g., anger, sadness, joy, etc.	5	4	3	2	1
2. Uses common coping reactions to expressions of emotions in others (comforting, distracting, avoidance, approach, etc.)	5	4	3	2	1
3. By statement in lieu of action	5	4	3	2	1
4. To describe alternative feelings through role play or verbalizations	5	4	3	2	1
F. Competency: Ability to express feelings	5	4	3	2	1

Comments: _____

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II. G. Competency: Ability to use non-verbal cues

Examples:	Strongly supportive	Slightly supportive	No evidence	Slightly nonsupportive	Strongly nonsupportive
1. To communicate through pantomine	5	4	3	2	1
2. To describe through graphic means	5	4	3	2	1
3. To recognize posture as a means of communication	5	4	3	2	1
4. To make use of common hand and arm gestures	5	4	3	2	1
5. To recognize and use facial gestures as a mode of communication	5	4	3	2	1

G. Competency: Ability to use non-verbal cues 5 4 3 2 1

Comments: _____

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II. Category: Communication 5 4 3 2 1